



United States Department of the Interior  
Bureau of Land Management

**FINAL**

North Dakota Field Office

July 2005



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**COTEAU PROPERTIES COMPANY  
FEDERAL COAL LEASE BY APPLICATION  
(NDM 91535) FOR  
WEST MINE AREA, FREEDOM MINE  
MERCER COUNTY, NORTH DAKOTA  
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT**

The Bureau of Land Management is responsible for the stewardship of our public lands. It is committed to manage, protect, and improve these lands in a manner to serve the needs of the American people for all times. Management is based on the principles of multiple use and sustained yield of our nation's resources within a framework of environmental responsibility and scientific technology. These resources include recreation; rangelands; timber; minerals; watershed; fish and wildlife; wilderness; air; and scenic, scientific, and cultural values.



United States Department of the Interior  
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

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2933 3rd Ave West  
Dickinson, ND 58601 701-227-7700  
<http://www.mt.blm.gov/ndfo/>



In Reply To:  
NDM91535

July 18, 2005

Dear Reader:

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) has prepared this Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to document and disclose the results of an environmental analysis of an application received by BLM to lease federal adjacent coal to an existing mine in Mercer County, North Dakota. A copy of this document is provided for your review and comments. The Final EIS may be reviewed on the BLM Montana homepage (<http://www.mt.blm.gov/>). Copies of the Final EIS also are available for public inspection at the North Dakota Field Office at the letterhead address.

The Draft EIS was published in April 2000, and a formal public hearing was held in Bismarck, North Dakota on June 23, 2004, to receive comments on the Draft EIS and on the fair market value and on the maximum economic recovery of the federal coal resource in the tract. Three public meetings had been held June 1-3, 2004 at New Town, Beulah, and Fort Yates, North Dakota. Comments from the meetings and comment letters received by the BLM on the Draft EIS are included with agency responses in section 5.0, Consultation and Coordination.

Fort Berthold's Three Affiliated Tribes, Fort Peck's Assiniboine and Sioux, and the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe have participated in consultation, as have the BLM, OSM, PSC, North Dakota State Historic Preservation Officer, Coteau, the National Trust for Historic Preservation, and the Advisory Council On Historic Preservation. American Indian Tribes consulted also include: Fort Belknap, Oglala Sioux Tribe, Rosebud Sioux Tribe, Santee Sioux Tribe of Nebraska, Yankton Sioux Tribe, Flandreau Santee Sioux Tribe, Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa Indians, Northern Cheyenne Tribe, Crow Creek Sioux Tribes, and Lower Brule. Results of those consultations resulted in the development of the Preferred Alternative (C).

The BLM will accept public comments on this Final EIS for thirty (30) days commencing on the date the Environmental Protection Agency publishes a Notice of Availability in the *Federal Register*. When the BLM becomes aware of the date of that publication, the BLM will notify the public of the final date when comments will be accepted. Comments received after the end of the 30-day comment period will be considered in preparation of the Record of Decision as time permits.

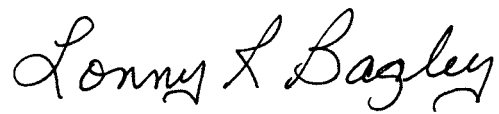
If you wish to comment on the Final EIS, your comments should relate directly to the document. We request that you make your comments as specific as possible and that you cite the location or locations in the document on which you are commenting. Substantive comments should: (1) give any new information that could alter conclusions; (2) show why or how analysis or assumptions in the Final EIS are flawed; (3) show errors of data, sources, or methods; Or (4) request clarifications that bear on conclusions. Opinions or preferences will not receive a formal response; however, they will be considered and included as part of the BLM decision making process.

This Final EIS was prepared pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act and applicable regulations, and other applicable statutes, to address possible environmental and socioeconomic impacts that could result from this leasing action. This Final EIS is not a decision document. Its purpose is to inform the public and the agency decision makers of the impacts of leasing a tract of federal coal to an existing mine in Mercer County, North Dakota and to evaluate alternatives to leasing the coal.

Comments, including names and street addresses of respondents, will be available for public review at the address listed below during regular business hours (7:45 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.), Monday through Friday, except holidays, and will be published as part of the Final EIS. Individual respondents may request confidentiality. If you wish to withhold your name or street address from public view or from disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act, you must state this prominently at the beginning of your written comment. Such requests will be honored to the extent allowed by law. All submissions from organizations or businesses, and from individuals identifying themselves as representative or officials of organizations or businesses, will be made available for public inspection in their entirety.

Please send written comments to the Bureau of Land Management, North Dakota Field Office, Attn: Allen Ollila, 2933 Third Avenue West, Dickinson, ND 58601-2619. Written comments may also be emailed to the attention of Allen Ollila at [mtndfo@blm.gov](mailto:mtndfo@blm.gov). E-mail comments must include the name and mailing address of the commenter to receive consideration. Written comments may also be faxed to (701) 227-8510.

If you have any questions or would like to obtain additional copies of this Final EIS, please contact Allen J. Ollila or Lonny R. Bagley at (701) 227-7700 or at the above address.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lonny R. Bagley". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Lonny R. Bagley  
North Dakota Field Office Manager